

Background

The Florida Keys waters have historically been used for living-aboard and storage of vessels at anchor. The water-related Keys lifestyle is a traditional part of the Keys culture. However, in recent years irresponsible boating practices, associated with proliferation of unmanaged anchorages, have created environmental impacts that have become a growing public concern.

Monroe County, in coordination with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and in partnership with the Cities of Marathon and Key West, is addressing these concerns through the State's Pilot Program for Anchoring and Mooring.



The FWC Pilot Program

In 2009 the Florida State Legislature directed the FWC to establish a Pilot Program (327.4105 F.S.) to explore potential options for regulating the anchoring or mooring of non-liveaboard vessels outside the marked boundaries of public mooring fields. Monroe County, in partnership with the Cities of Key West and Marathon, is participating in the Pilot Program.

The Pilot Program anchoring regulations described in this brochure represent the culmination of ideas and recommendations gathered from numerous public meetings, in an attempt to address anchoring impacts in the Florida Keys. This is a test program that will run through July 1, 2014, unless extended by the Florida State Legislature.

Monroe County's Anchoring Ordinance

(No.036-2012)

The anchoring ordinance establishes regulations designed to meet two primary objectives,

- A reduction in the number of derelict vessels
- Elimination of the illegal discharge of sewage

and provides for Managed Anchoring Zones and No-Anchoring Buffer zones as described below.

Managed Anchoring Zones are established for the purpose of protecting the marine environment, enhancing navigational safety, and deterring improperly stored, abandoned, or derelict vessels.

The following regulations apply within Managed Anchoring Zones:

a. Prohibition of vessels exhibiting pre-derelict vessel conditions, including:

- 1) *Vessel is not able to be used for navigation.*
- 2) *Vessel is listing.*
- 3) *Vessel is aground.*
- 4) *Vessel is in danger of breaking its mooring.*
- 5) *Vessel is sinking.*
- 6) *Vessel is dragging anchor.*
- 7) *Vessel has broken its mooring and has been secured for the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens.*

b. Prohibition of derelict vessels.

c. Proof of pumpout required. Vessels anchored for more than ten consecutive days, and which are required to have a marine sanitation device, must provide proof of pumpout. The municipal pumpout programs provide service for vessels located in managed anchoring zones, and a registration process by which vessel owners sign up for regular pumpouts at a frequency based on anticipated need, with a minimum of one pumpout per month. A registration sticker or tag may be provided by the pumpout program(s) which vessel owners may display on their vessel, and which will be considered proof of pumpout. If a vessel owner utilizes another vessel pumpout provider the vessel owner is required to maintain documentation and pumpout logs to demonstrate use of pumpout (every ten days) to FWC, MCSO or other law enforcement officers.

Managed Anchoring Zones are established in the following areas:

Boca Chica Basin
(western portion)



Key West Harbor



Cow Key Channel



Boot Key Harbor



No-Anchoring Buffer Zones are established for the purpose of protecting maritime infrastructure, enhancing navigational safety and promoting public access and the use of public mooring fields.

The following regulations apply within No-Anchoring Buffer Zones:

No anchoring or mooring of any kind (vessels or floating structures) except for vessels mooring within established permitted public mooring fields by permission of the mooring field owner or manager, vessels within a leased anchoring area associated with a mooring field, commercial vessels (e.g. barges) engaged in marine related work, military operations, vessels anchored for the purpose of fishing or other recreational activities (but not overnight), or in the case of an emergency (e.g. weather, mechanical, medical) causing the need for a vessel to temporarily anchor.

No Anchoring Buffer Zones are established in the following areas:

Key West Seaplane Basin



Boca Chica Basin (eastern portion)



Boot Key Harbor
(within 50' of mooring fields/leased anchoring area)



Penalties

(for violation of the above regulations)

All boaters are encouraged to recognize the importance of the Pilot Program in protecting the environment by complying with the regulations. Any vessel owner found not in compliance will first be given a warning and an explanation of the violation.

Citations will be issued as follows:

- (1) First offense- \$50 (30 days after a warning)
- (2) Second offense- \$100
- (3) Third offense- \$250
- (4) Fourth or subsequent offenses- \$250 and FWC will request that the owner remove the vessel from the Managed Anchoring Zone or No-Anchoring Buffer Zone

(There will be 30 days provided between citations)

For more Information

Monroe County

County Marine Resources Office: (305) 289-2805 or
<http://fl-monroecounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=428>

City of Marathon

(305) 289-8877

City of Key West

(305) 809-3982

MONROE COUNTY ANCHORING & MOORING ORDINANCE



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In Association with

City of Key West

City of Marathon

**Florida Fish & Wildlife
Conservation Commission**

